

persons. The evidence is only getting plainer by the day.

When we deny the humanity of our brothers and sisters, as we have seen throughout our history and over the past year, the inevitable and tragic result is violence. Abortion does undeniable violence to the baby and undeniable violence to the mother. Thankfully, looking back at the past decade, we have made significant strides toward building a culture that respects, values, and even protects all human life, even in its simplest, earliest stages of development.

Many States have ensured that public funds are directed toward pregnancy health centers, rather than abortion facilities, providing life-affirming alternatives to families in need. And in just the last decade alone, States have passed more than 400 pro-life laws—more than one-third of all pro-life laws that States have passed since *Roe v. Wade* was decided. This is indeed reason for hope.

Through our laws and with our lives, we ought to affirm the truth that the lives of both the mother and the baby matter and that healthcare should heal, protect, and preserve both of those lives.

I have introduced legislation to help our laws affirm that very truth. Through my bill, the Abortion Is Not Healthcare Act, we have a chance to stop the tax deductibility of abortions, which are currently categorized as “medical care” by the IRS, because we must be serious: Whatever else it may be, of course, elective abortion is not healthcare. That is why physicians literally take an oath to do no harm. The government should not offer tax benefits for a procedure that kills hundreds of thousands of unborn children each and every year.

We have the chance to prematurely stop the use of American foreign aid—the opportunity permanently to stop the use of American foreign aid—from funding or promoting abortions overseas and perpetuating violence against women and of children abroad, especially baby girls.

The Protecting Life in Foreign Assistance Act will save countless lives across the globe, and it affirms the truth that the lives of all unborn children, regardless of where they are from, have dignity and worth.

As the lyrics of a children’s song in my church—a song that I sang in Sunday school as a child—say about each one of us, I am a child of God. We are all one human family, all children of God—these littlest among us, too, who cannot yet sing for themselves, but they will soon. They will soon.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILIBUSTER

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, in the 2020 elections, Americans chose an evenly-divided Senate—half Republican, half Democrat. Evenly divided. Since the Vice President is able to break a tie when it comes to specifically organizing the Senate, Democrats have the majority.

Now some Democrats want to lower the threshold for all the votes so that to pass anything, all they would need to do in case of a tie vote would have the Vice President be the tiebreaker. That is the way that a majority works. When there is a tie and the Vice President is in one party, they get to break the tie in that direction, of course.

What we need to make sure of, though, is that there is fairness in the process. The traditions and how this institution works are that we have a filibuster. Sixty votes is how legislation is passed.

We know that the press and sometimes folks in Congress say it is hard to pass a law. Well, it is not supposed to be easy. It takes discussion. It takes negotiation. It brings people together. That is the idea of needing 60 votes—to bring people together to get a bipartisan consensus so that all the voices are heard; that there is a majority, and the minority voice is heard, and it forces us to find common ground.

Frankly, I think there is too little of finding common ground in Washington already. The last thing America needs is even more divisiveness. This is a big, diverse country. We don’t need 50 percent of the country plus one to run roughshod over all the others. That is why our Founders were so careful to protect the rights of the minority. That is why they created the Bill of Rights, why they created the electoral college, and why they created the U.S. Senate. The Founding Fathers didn’t want the Senate to be a copy of the House. We are intended to be a check on the House.

There is a story that President Washington compared the Senate to a saucer used to cool down a cup of tea. President Madison compared it to a fence. We are not supposed to be a smaller version of the House of Representatives. The Senate is supposed to cool things down. We are supposed to think things through. We are supposed to stop bad ideas and stop the House from moving too fast. Changing the rules of the Senate would make that impossible.

Lowering the bar to 50 votes could also be a blatant power grab, which is 50 votes and the Vice President. The Democrats could even add States to the Union—specifically States that would elect more Democrats to the Senate. It would give them even more Senate seats, could even give them a permanent majority in the Senate.

With 50 votes plus the Vice President, Democrats could also pack the

Supreme Court with liberal activist judges—judges who legislate from the bench, not judges who apply the law as written. That would give them a permanent majority both in the Senate and on the Court.

With a single rule change, one branch of government, one Chamber of Congress, could be under permanent Democratic control. It is no surprise that it is tempting to Senate Democrats and that the far-left branch of that party is demanding that occur.

You remember that when President Trump was in office, Republicans had a chance to do exactly the same thing. In fact, former President Trump repeatedly asked us and told us that we should do just that. In one particularly memorable example, he tweeted: “The U.S. Senate should switch to 51 votes.” He said: “Dems would do it, no doubt.” More than 30 different times, President Trump asked that Republicans end the filibuster. We didn’t. We stuck to the intentions of our Founding Fathers. We protected the rights of the minority, and we put country before party.

If Democrats won’t stop the power grab for the good of the country, then they should at least do it for their own good.

Democrats have had 50 votes and the Vice President for only a few days. In fact, when Democrats were in the minority, 33 Democratic Senators said they didn’t want to change the rules. They signed a letter, and that letter called for the preservation of the rights of the minority. Twenty-seven of those Democrats are still Members of the Senate today. One of those Democrats is now the Vice President of the United States, Vice President KAMALA HARRIS.

Even President Biden called the idea of eliminating the filibuster “a very dangerous move.” The White House Press Secretary told us last week President Biden still opposes changing the rules.

If Democrats go down this road and break the rules of the Senate, they are doing more than just hurting the institution; they are admitting their ideas don’t have broad bipartisan support. Think about that. If the Democratic agenda had the support of the American people, then they wouldn’t need to change the rules. If Democrats could find bipartisan support to pass their tax increases, they would leave the rules alone. If Democrats could find bipartisan support to pass the Green New Deal and higher energy costs that come with it, they would leave the rules alone. If they could restrict gun ownership, they would leave the rules alone. They can’t, and they know they can’t. They know the American people have looked at their progressive agenda and said: No, thank you.

President Biden’s inaugural address last week talked a lot about unity. He said that “with unity we can do great things.” I agree.

I ask my Democratic colleagues if they agree with the President’s inaugural address, or do they really think

that they want to make the U.S. Senate more partisan, more divided. Do they really want to take power away from individual Senators and give it to whoever has 50 votes and the tiebreaker at the moment? If it is hard for Democrats to pass laws, then they should try talking with us. Propose bipartisan solutions to our Nation's challenges. Persuade your colleagues. Make progress together.

As my friend, former Senator Lamar Alexander, said in his farewell address just a month ago—he said: “We don’t need a change of rules. The Senate needs a change of behavior.”

I urge my Democratic colleagues to reject this blatant power grab. Stop this rush to take more and more power. Come to the center. Reach across the aisle. Find common ground.

Senate Republicans are ready to work together to help the American people, to get people back to work, to get our kids safely back to school so they don’t fall further behind, and to get the virus behind us. Join us. Let’s work together. Let’s do what is right for the people we serve.

I yield the floor.

NOMINATION OF ALEJANDRO NICHOLAS MAYORKAS

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of Ali Mayorkas’s nomination to be Secretary of Homeland Security.

I believe Ali is uniquely qualified to face the challenges our Nation is facing on day one. He brings to this office a diverse background and set of experiences in both the private and public sectors that will serve him well.

I have known Ali for many years and am proud to have recommended him to President Clinton for the position of U.S. Attorney for the Central District of California. I also worked very closely with Ali while he served as President Obama’s Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and later Deputy Secretary of DHS.

We all know that the role of Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security is challenging. Recent history has shown the threats facing the United States are diverse and ever-changing.

Over my many years working with Ali, I have witnessed his intelligence, kindness, and thoughtfulness, as well as the compassion and morality he brings with him to work every day. In many ways, Ali’s life story reflects the spirit of the American dream, and I would like to briefly pass along some of that story today.

Born in Havana, Cuba, Ali and his family fled to the United States in 1960. He attended the University of California-Berkeley, where he earned a bachelor’s degree with distinction in 1981. He went on to earn his law degree from Loyola Law School in 1985. From 1989 to 1998, he served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Central District of California where he prosecuted a

wide array of Federal crimes. Ali became the first U.S. Attorney in the Central District of California to be appointed from within the office when he was appointed in 1998.

He created the Civil Rights Section in the office to prosecute hate crimes; he developed an innovative program to address violent crime by targeting criminals’ possession of firearms; he led the prosecution of street gangs; and he still had time to develop an after-school program to help at-risk youth.

Ali’s approach to enforcing our Nation’s laws demonstrates a much-needed holistic view that understands the complexity of the challenge. He further developed his sharp legal skills as a partner at O’Melveny and Myers from 2001 to 2009 where he represented companies in high-profile and sensitive government enforcement cases. He was recognized by his worldwide firm for his leadership and was named by the National Law Journal in 2008 as one of the “50 Most Influential Minority Lawyers in America.”

When Ali took over as Director of USCIS in 2009, he worked to administer our immigration laws while preserving our legacy as a nation of immigrants. He helped ensure integrity of our immigration laws by decreasing fraud and bringing accountability to our immigration system.

Significantly, under President Obama’s directive to grant deferred action to immigrants who arrived in this country as children, Ali successfully implemented the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, known as DACA.

This program played a critical role for hundreds of thousands of young people who were able to get jobs, acquire driver’s licenses, purchase homes and go to college. I am proud that Ali will continue to play a role in allowing these young people to pursue the American dream.

When Ali became the Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security under President Obama in 2013, he took on even more responsibility. He led the DHS response to the Ebola and Zika virus epidemics, as well as cybersecurity negotiations with China.

He oversaw the agency’s complex efforts to combat terrorism and enhance the security and management of our borders. He worked to facilitate trade and travel, and he oversaw the enforcement of our immigration laws.

And he was responsible for coordinating efforts to safeguard cyberspace and oversee disaster coordination with Federal, State, local, international, and private sector partners.

The United States faces new threats to our security every day. We need experienced, intelligent, and moral leadership at DHS to combat those threats.

I have full confidence that Ali Mayorkas will bring all of those qualities to the role of Homeland Security Secretary. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote to confirm Alejandro Mayorkas for the position of Secretary of Homeland Security.

Thank you.

CONFIRMATION OF JANET LOUISE YELLEN

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I voted against the confirmation of Janet Yellen to be Treasury Secretary. Dr. Yellen is well known as an academic, as an economic policy adviser to President Clinton, and as Chair of the Federal Reserve. In all of these positions, she has proven herself to be wrong on fiscal, monetary, and economic policy.

At her confirmation hearing, she vigorously supported the additional \$2 trillion stimulus package President Biden has put forward. Her argument is that this time is different—but since the great recession, big spenders have not receded from that argument, even during the times of unprecedented spending growth in the Trump administration. Moreover, we know what the problem is in our economy today: government-mandated business closures. The economy contracted by nearly one-third in the second quarter of 2020 when lockdowns were in full force, but in the third quarter, the summer, when restrictions were relaxed, the economy made nearly a full recovery. This clearly indicates that our economy is not in need of stimulus; it needs fewer tin pot dictators in Governors’ mansions.

Much more troubling than Dr. Yellen’s call for more spending is her dismissal of the harms of continued borrowing. She has said that borrowing and spending is not a problem because interest rates are low. And the key part of her argument is that stimulus will generate more growth than interest will cost to borrow. That is the definition of “modern monetary theory.” She did not use that phrase because it is so obviously wrong-headed. Modern monetary theory is self-conflicted because proponents of it, like Dr. Yellen, say we can borrow in good time, but they never say we need to be austere in bad times. In fact, bad times are when they call for even more borrowing and spending.

Modern monetary theory is nothing more than window dressing on a deep-seated desire to always spend more, no matter what, and its proponents hope to reap electoral benefits now and to leave office before the bill comes due. Well, the bill is coming due. The Congressional Budget Office already estimates that interest on our current debt will begin growing at nearly 22 percent annually in just 6 years. What does that mean? Higher taxes or Venezuela-style inflation—Probably both. I simply cannot support a candidate who seeks to inflict such pain on the American people in just a few short years for an entirely unneeded stimulus today. We know what works—opening the economy. We know what does not work—modern monetary theory.